

*Fulbright*

10 February 1962

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**

**SUBJECT: Calls to Various Persons with Regard to the Powers-Pryor-Abel Releases**

1. Major General Chester A. Clifton called from the White House. He wanted to be sure a record was made of calls concerning the Powers-Pryor-Abel Releases.

2. The Director advised that he was unable to contact the House and Senate Minority Floor Leaders, Representative Charles A. Halleck and Senator Everett M. Dirksen.

3. Calls were made to Representative Halleck between 12:00 and 12:30 a.m. and again at 8:00 a.m. with no answer at the residence. His office was notified at 9:40 a.m. of the attempts to reach him to advise him of the releases and was advised that he was expected to call from Rensselaer, Indiana, at which time the message would be passed to him of Mr. McCone's attempt to reach him.

At 1:30 p.m. Mr. Charles A. Baird, Executive Assistant to Representative Halleck, was contacted at his home to ascertain if the Congressman had been notified. He advised that the message

probably had not been relayed. The Congressman is in Indiana for Lincoln Day speeches and hard to reach. He will be out of the City all week.

4. Senator Dirksen was called at 12:30 a.m. His answering service advised that he was in Virginia and could not be reached. The answering service called back at 1:30 a.m. and provided a number in Virginia but due to the hour it was not attempted. At 9:00 a.m. Mr. McCone talked to Mr. John R. Gornien, Administrative Assistant to Senator Dirksen, told him the President wanted Senator Dirksen to know about this immediately and gave him the gist of the Powers release.

Mr. Gornien was contacted again at his home at 1:00 p.m. He advised he had been unable to contact the Senator. He indicated the Senator was flying.

5. Mr. McCone contacted General Eisenhower by telephone Friday evening. The General was most appreciative and wanted Mr. McCone to express his appreciation to the President for the information. This has been done.

6. Mr. McCone contacted Senator Fulbright who appreciated the information.

7. Mr. McCone advised Mr. J. Edgar Hoover personally about the releases. Mr. Hoover was in complete agreement with the exchange.

**STATEMENT TO BE GIVEN TO SENATOR DIRKSEN AND  
CONGRESSMAN HALLECK, 12 MIDNIGHT, 9 FEBRUARY 1962**

At approximately 2:30 a.m., Washington time, this morning, we expect that Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot who went down in Russia and has been imprisoned by the Soviets, will be released to U. S. officials in Berlin. Also to be released at the same time is Frederick Pryor, a young student in West Berlin who was arrested and charged with espionage by the East German authorities when he went to East Berlin on his own initiative several months ago. Pryor has had no connection whatsoever with any U. S. intelligence activities. The U. S. authorities will simultaneously release at the East-West Berlin Border Rudolf Abel, the Soviet agent who was convicted of espionage in 1957 and has been serving sentence in the Federal penitentiary, Atlanta, Georgia.

These efforts are the outcome of very quiet negotiations carried out through a New York lawyer, James B. Donovan, who had served as court appointed attorney for Abel and who was acting under the direction and with the approval of the interested departments of the Government.

**NOTE:** If queried as to whether Powers was a traitor or defector, suggest answering, "So far as we know Powers complied with his instructions. We will, of course, go into this most carefully, and his future will depend upon the outcome of our inquiry."

**STATEMENT TO BE GIVEN TO SENATOR FULBRIGHT AFTER  
NOTIFICATION**

We have just received word that Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot who went down in Russia and has been imprisoned by the Soviets, has been released to U. S. officials in Berlin. Also released at the same time was Frederick Pryor, a young student in West Berlin who was arrested and charged with espionage by the East German authorities when he went to East Berlin on his own initiative several months ago. Pryor has had no connection whatsoever with any U. S. intelligence activities. The U. S. authorities simultaneously released at the East-West Berlin Border Rudolf Abel, the Soviet agent who was convicted of espionage in 1957 and has been serving sentence in the Federal penitentiary, Atlanta, Georgia.

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TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS:

8:45 a.m.

DCI talked with Mr. Houston regarding the release of Francis Powers; said there had been a leak in the Washington Post. He stated there were two people that he had been unable to contact, at the request of the President: Cong. Halleck and Sen. Dirksen, on Friday evening to advise them of the Powers case. He had tried to call Cong. Halleck between 12:00 and 12:30 and again at 8:00 this morning with no answer at the residence. He called Sen. Dirksen at 12:00 - 12:30, Friday evening and an answering service said that he was in Virginia at a country place and could not be reached. At 1:30 a.m. the answering service called him and gave the DCI a number where he might be reached. DCI did not wish to disturb him at that hour. DCI asked that Mr. Houston notify their offices (Halleck and Dirksen) that he had tried to reach them at the personal request of the President. DCI congratulated Mr. Houston on his handling of the case.

8:50 a.m. Tried to call Mr. Bundy at the White House; left word.

8:55 a.m. Tried to call Gen. Clifton at the White House; left word.

9:00 a.m. Spoke with Sen. Dirksen's administrative assistant, John Gomien, and gave him the gist of the Powers case, stating that the President had wanted him to know about this.

9:15 a.m. Spoke with Walter Cutler, Secretary Rusk's assistant, and set up a tentative time to see the Secretary, at 1:00 p.m. today; will speak about Amb. Farland and asked that Mr. Cutler pull the file. Mr. Cutler said they already had the file on the Ambassador.

9:25 a.m. Spoke with General Clifton; asked that he tell the President:

(1) - He contacted Gen. Eisenhower by telephone concerning the Powers matter; he was most appreciative and wanted DCI to express his appreciation to the President; (2) - He contacted J. Edgar Hoover personally and he was in complete agreement; (3) - He reached Sen. Fulbright who appreciated the information but did not like to be routed out of bed at that hour; (4) - DCI is contacting the offices of Halleck and Dirksen so that they will be advised.

Gen. Clifton inquired about the press coverage of the case and DCI assured him that everything had been worked out.

9:30 a.m. Charles Murphy returned DCI's call, from New York. DCI advised him of Powers case and exchange of Abel. Mr. Murphy congratulated Mr. McCone, who said the man to congratulate was Mr. Dulles; he had handled it.